

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

### TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

BY WM. MORTIMER CLARK.

In the *Siromata* or "Patchwork" of Clement of Alexandria—that "heterogeneous mixture" as Schaff terms it, of "curiosities of history, beauties of poetry, reveries of philosophy, Christian truths and heretical errors," and which was compiled before the year A.D. 220, reference is made to a treatise then generally known as the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Eusebius, of Cæsarea, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, which is also full of extracts from ancient authorities, quotes from this work as being well known in his day, and citations are made from it by Athanasius in one of his *Festal Epistles*. Beyond this incidental allusions to this book, nothing was known of it by the Church as it was supposed to have been irretrievably lost, along with the vast mass of Christian literature which disappeared during the barbarian and Turkish invasions of the declining empire. This venerable document has however recently been recovered and is now placed within the easy reach of every one engaged in the study of Christian antiquities. Its perusal cannot fail to awaken much interest, not only in the student, but in all who look with attention to the teachings and practices of our fellow-Christians who lived and wrote so near the apostolic age.

The manuscript of this archaic treatise was discovered in 1875 by Philotheos Bryennios, then metropolitan of Serræ, in Macedonia, in the library of the Most Holy Sepulchre in Fannar of Constantinople. It is contained in a cursive M.S. volume, which dates from the year A.D. 1056. It includes several other treatises, among which are the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the two *Epistles of Clement*, and some twelve *Epistles of Ignatius*. The little treatise known as the "Teaching of the Twelve," dates unquestionably as far back, in the opinion of the highest authorities, as the middle of the second century. It has been republished by Bryennios, at Constantinople, in 1883, and has now been presented to our English-speaking public by Professors Hitchcock and Brown of Union College, N.Y., in an exceedingly well printed Greek and English volume issued by Scribner & Sons.

The work is divided into sixteen short chapters. It deals largely in admonitions as to the conduct and conversation becoming a Christian life, and from its injunctions we can see what duties were then chiefly enforced, and what irregularities were to be specially guarded against.

The opening chapter treats chiefly of the duty of a Christian towards his enemies and the poor, and while alms giving is insisted on, it concludes by this singular but expressive injunction as to prudence in liberality. "Let thine alms sweat in thy hands until thou knowest to whom thou shouldst give." In chapter III. occurs the further monition regarding giving. "Become not one, who for taking stretches out hands, but for giving draws them in. Thou shalt not hesitate to give, nor when giving shalt thou murmur, for thou shalt know who is the good dispenser of the recompense. Thou shalt not turn away the needy, but shall share all things with thy brother, and shalt not say they are thine own; for if ye are partners in that which is imperishable how much more in the perishable things."

The duty of humility is thus inculcated. "Be meek since the meek shall inherit the earth. Become long-suffering, and pitiful, and guileless, and good, and humble continually, i. e. the words which thou hast heard. Thou shalt not exalt thyself nor permit overboldness to thy soul. Thou shalt not cleave to the high but with the righteous and lowly, thou shalt dwell." The slave was not forgotten, and while slavery is not denounced and is as in Paul's writing modified by Christian love. "Thou shalt not lay commands in thy bitterness upon thy slave, or handmaid who hope in the same God, lest they perchance shall not fear the God who is over both, for He cometh not to call according to the appearance, but to those whom the Spirit hath made ready. And ye, slaves, shall be subject to your lords as to God's image in modesty and fear."

The Teaching is very explicit on the subject of the Christian duty to the minister of Christ. "My child," says the writer, "him that speaks to thee the Word of God remember night and day and thou shalt honour him as the Lord; for when that which pertaineth to

the Lord is spoken there the Lord is." To our Church which seems now in sincerity, engaged in the "unmuzzling of the ox," the following chapter may be quoted *in extenso*.—

"Chap. XIII. Every true prophet who will settle among you, is worthy of his support. Likewise a true teacher, he also is worthy, like the workman of his support. Every first-fruit, then, of the products of wine-press and threshing floor, of oxen and of sheep, thou shalt take and give to the prophet, for they are your high priests. But if ye have no prophet give it to the poor. If thou makest a baking of bread take the first and give according to the command. In like manner when thou openest a jar of wine or oil, take the first of it and give it to the prophet; and of money and clothing, and every possession take the first as seems right to thee, and give according to the commandment."

While the settled prophet and teacher was thus carefully to be considered, it is instructive to read the address given regarding the treatment of the peripatetic evangelist. "Every apostle who cometh to you let him be received as the Lord. But he shall not remain more than one day, if however there be need then the next day, but if he remain three days he is a false prophet. But when the apostle departeth let him take nothing except bread enough till he lodge again; but if he ask money he is a false prophet. And every prophet who speaketh in the spirit ye shall not try or judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. But not every one that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but only if he have the ways of the Lord. So from their ways shall the false prophet and the prophet be known. And no prophet who orders a meal, in the spirit, eateth of it, unless indeed he is a false prophet; and every prophet who teacheth the truth, if he is not that which he teacheth, is a false prophet. . . . Whoever, in the spirit says give me money or something else, ye shall not hear him, but if for others in need, he bids you give, let no man judge him. But let every one that cometh in the Lord's name be received, but afterwards ye shall test and know him; for ye shall have understanding right and left. If he who comes is a traveller help him as much as ye can, but he shall not remain with you, unless for two or three days, if there be necessity. But if he will take up his abode with you being an artisan, let him work and so eat; but if he have no trade provide according to your understanding that no idler live with you as a Christian. But if he will not act according to this he is one who makes gain out of Christ, beware of such."

The following intimation regarding baptism will be read with interest. "Baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in running water, and if thou hast not running water baptize in other water, and if thou canst not in cold then in warm. But if thou hast neither pour water upon the head thrice into the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit." This is now the Syrian mode of baptism, and has always been so. The method prescribed is in accordance with the ceremony depicted in the Callixtin catacomb at Rome, where a young man is represented standing ankle deep in water and receiving baptism by having water poured on his head.

That the first day of the week was the usual day for public worship is evident from the following: "But on the Lord's Day do ye assemble and break bread and give thanks after confessing your transgressions." No one unless baptized was admitted to partake of the eucharist and the reconciliation of friends in controversy is insisted on prior to this ordinance being received. A short liturgical form of prayer to be used after the eucharist is given in chap. X. The following are a few sentences. "We thank Thee, Holy Father, for Thy holy name which Thou hast caused to dwell in our hearts and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Thy servant; to Thee be the glory for ever. Thou, Almighty Master didst make all things for Thy name's sake; both food and drink, and didst give to men for enjoyment in order that they might give thanks to thee; but to us Thou hast graciously given spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Thy servant. Before all things we thank Thee that Thou art powerful; to Thee be the glory. Remember, Lord, Thy Church, to deliver it from every evil, and to make it perfect in Thy love, and gather it, the sanctified, from the four winds into Thy kingdom which Thou hast prepared for it."

The government of the Church is not forgotten, for the teaching is. "appoint for yourselves, bishops, overseers, and deacons really of the Lord, men meek and not avaricious, and upright and proved." The appointment proceeds from the church itself and the Word used conveys the idea of election by show of hands. Our prelatist friends will search in vain for any trace of the three orders.

That the "blessed hope" had a great place in the theology of these early disciples is evident for the closing chapter begins. "Watch for your life's sake, let your lamps not go out, and your loins not be relaxed, but be ready for ye know not the hour in which our Lord cometh, but ye shall come together often and seek the things which befit your souls."

The false teaching, hate, and lawlessness of the last days, and the coming of the "world deceiver" are spoken of and we are told that "all created men shall come into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and perish." The closing sentence speaks of "the resurrection of the dead, yet not of all, but as it hath been said the Lord will come and all the saints with Him."

But enough has been said to call the attention of our readers to this little book which after its silence of long past centuries again awakes to speak in quaint and simple language to the household of faith in the new world.

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IN RELATION TO REVIVALS.

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Sovereignty is a prerogative and not an attribute of God. It proceeds from the perfection of His nature and attributes and the independence of His being. In the exercise of this prerogative, which is absolute and universal, God does whatsoever pleases Him. So the prophet Daniel, (xiv. 35) declares. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" The Apostle Paul also affirms: "He maketh all things after the counsel of His own will." (Eph. i. 11.)

Now let us observe that the sphere in which He exercises this prerogative may be viewed in three respects. First, that in which he has effected the establishment of the laws of the physical and moral worlds, under which His creatures live. Second, that He ever exercises this prerogative in alloting to us and to the nations of the earth our respective places and spheres in this world—the length of our days, the bounds of our habitations, and fixes the time when we shall pass away. And thirdly in bestowing His gifts as he pleases—giving riches, honour and wisdom to some and not to others—sending His Gospel and its blessings to some persons and peoples and not to others—bringing some to faith and the experience of salvation and allowing others to remain in sin and ignorance.

These views are sustained by obvious facts lying before us in the realms of observation, and of history, as well as in the teachings of the Scriptures. It is not our duty at present to defend, but simply to fairly state them. To any objector it may be sufficient to reply in the words of sacred writ: "He giveth not account of any of His matters"; "None can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

In speaking of God's sovereignty in relation to revivals on this occasion it will perhaps be best to view it first in relation to the whole plan of redemption and work of salvation. For a revival is the same free gift of God's grace given in large measure and to many which he gives to quicken or renew any single soul. If we therefore understand how free grace saves and restores individual souls we will not find it very difficult to understand how the infinite love and grace of God may quicken and save many. It is evident that in forming His plan of salvation, God was moved by no necessity, force or influence, external to Him; but solely by His own sovereign grace and love. Also when He accepted as our surety and substitute His Son Christ Jesus there was no constraint or necessity laid on Him from without, but He did it of His own free grace. Again, in bestowing saving grace on individual men, He is not moved thereto by their merits, their faith or worthiness. For if He is, then salvation is not of grace; but of debt. In truth, we find it bestowed just as it was provided, that is, in the exercise of free and sovereign grace. In proof of this the Apostle Paul quotes (Rom. ix. 15.)